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1 CLAIMS:

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3 1. An apparatus for spraying liquid surface treatment
4 material, said apparatus comprising:

5 a housing;

6 a liquid inlet for supply of the liquid surface
7 treatment material;8 a gas inlet for supply of pressurised gas to be
9 mixed with the liquid surface treatment material;10 an outlet nozzle through which the gas and liquid
11 surface treatment material is sprayed;12 a control valve adapted to regulate the supply of
13 the liquid surface treatment material to the outlet
14 nozzle;15 a gas valve operable between an open position and
16 a closed position;17 a first communicating passageway connecting said
18 gas inlet to said gas valve; and19 a second communicating passageway connecting said
20 gas valve to said outlet nozzle;21 wherein said second passageway is provided with a
22 stepped portion therein so that a gas vortex is created
23 therethrough.

24

25 2. An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said
26 second passageway is offset from said first passageway.

27

28 3. An apparatus according to either Claim 1 or Claim
29 2, wherein said second passageway is substantially
30 conical in shape.31 4. An apparatus according to any preceding claim,
32 wherein said second passageway includes an inlet and an
33 outlet, wherein said second passageway is tapered from
34 said inlet to said outlet.35
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1 ~~5. An apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said~~
2 ~~taper is between 1 to 15°.~~

3

4 6. An apparatus according to either Claim 4 or Claim
5 5, wherein said second passageway has a radius of
6 curvature at said outlet so as to provide gas to the
outlet nozzle in a substantially horizontal direction.

7. An apparatus according to any preceding claim,
wherein said stepped portion of said second passageway
comprises a ledge whose width tapers up to a maximum of
10% of the radius of said second passageway at the
level of the stepped portion.

15 8. An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the
16 longitudinal axis of said outlet nozzle extends across
17 said second passageway.

9. An apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein the axis of symmetry of said ledge is offset from said longitudinal axis of said outlet nozzle.

23 10. An apparatus for spraying liquid surface treatment
24 material, said apparatus comprising:

25 a housing;

26 a liquid inlet for supply of the liquid surface
27 treatment material;

28 a gas inlet for supply of pressurised gas to be
29 mixed with the liquid surface treatment material;

30 an outlet nozzle through which the gas and liquid
31 surface treatment material is sprayed;

32 a control valve adapted to regulate the supply of
33 the liquid surface treatment material to the outlet
34 nozzle;

35 a gas valve operable between an open position and
36 a closed position;

1 wherein said piston valve comprises an inner apertured
2 sleeve and an outer apertured sleeve, said inner and
3 outer sleeves being co-axial, and wherein said inner
4 sleeve is located within said outer sleeve and is
5 rotatably adjustable relative to said outer sleeve.

6
7 18. An apparatus according to any of Claims 12 to 17,
8 wherein the liquid control needle valve is controlled
9 by said trigger means via an axially-sliding sleeve or
10 slipper member situated on a rearward portion of said
11 housing.

12
13 19. An apparatus according to any of Claims 12 to 18,
14 wherein said liquid control needle valve is provided
15 with a rotational flow adjustment means.

16
17 20. An apparatus according to Claim 19, wherein said
18 flow adjustment means comprises a stem member, a
19 rotational adjuster, and a return spring, said stem
20 member being threaded at its rearmost extremity to
21 accept said rotational adjuster.

22
23 21. An apparatus according to Claim 20, wherein said
24 stem member is actuated externally by said trigger
25 means, and is returned to its initial position by said
26 return spring.

27
28 22. An apparatus according to any of Claims 12 to 21,
29 wherein said liquid inlet comprises a pressurized
30 material supply connector, and wherein said needle
31 valve is supplied with a liquid by said pressurized
32 material supply connector.

33
34 23. An apparatus according to any of Claims 12 to 21,
35 wherein said liquid inlet comprises a gravity feed
36 liquid reservoir, and wherein said needle valve is

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28. A method according to any of Claims 25 to 27,
wherein the mixing of said liquid and said annular gas
jet is controlled by a trigger valve mechanism on said
spray apparatus.

20 30. A method according to Claim 29, wherein said
21 control valve is a liquid control needle valve.

32. A method according to Claim 31, wherein said piston valve comprises an inner apertured sleeve and an outer apertured sleeve, said inner and outer sleeves being co-axial, and wherein said inner sleeve is located within said outer sleeve and is rotatably adjustable relative to said outer sleeve.